



News Release

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IRS HAS \$2.5 BILLION FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO FAILED TO FILE 1999 RETURNS

WASHINGTON -- Unclaimed refunds totaling more than \$2.5 billion are awaiting about 1.9 million people who failed to file a 1999 income tax return, the Internal Revenue Service announced today. However, in order to collect the money, a return must be filed with an IRS office no later than April 15, 2003.

The IRS estimates that about half of those who could claim refunds would receive more than \$511. Some individuals may have had taxes withheld from their wages but had too little income to require filing a tax return. Others may not have had any tax withheld but would be eligible for the refundable Earned Income Tax Credit.

"Time is running out. If you don't file a return, you can't get a refund," said Acting Commissioner Bob Wenzel. "We urge taxpayers to double-check their records before the April 15 deadline. We want people to get the refunds they're entitled to."

In cases where a return was not filed, the law provides most taxpayers with a three-year window of opportunity for claiming a refund. If no return is filed to claim the refund within three years, the money becomes property of the U.S. Treasury. For 1999 returns, the window closes on April 15, 2003. The law requires that these returns be properly addressed, postmarked and mailed by that date. There is no penalty assessed by the IRS for filing a late return qualifying for a refund.

The IRS reminds taxpayers seeking a 1999 refund that their checks will be held if they have not filed tax returns for 2000 or 2001. In addition, the refund will be applied to any amounts still owed to the IRS and may be used to satisfy unpaid child support or past due federal debts such as student loans.

By failing to file a return, individuals stand to lose more than refunds of taxes withheld or paid during 1999. Many low-income workers may not have claimed the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). Although eligible taxpayers may get a refund when their EITC is more than their tax, those who file returns more than three years late would be able only to offset their tax. They would not be able to receive refunds if the credit exceeded their tax.

Generally, individuals qualified for the EITC in 1999 if they earned less than \$30,580 and had more than one qualifying child living with them, less than \$26,928 with one qualifying child, or less than \$10,200 and had no qualifying child.

Current and prior year tax forms are available on the IRS Web site (www.irs.gov) or by calling 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676). Taxpayers who need help also can call the IRS help line at 1-800-829-1040.

A state-by-state breakdown of estimates for individuals who failed to file a 1999 return with a refund due is attached.

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**INDIVIDUALS WHO FAILED TO FILE A 1999 RETURN AND REFUND AMOUNTS
(ESTIMATED)**

Location	Individuals	Median Refund	Total Refunds (\$000)
Alabama	29,500	\$501	\$26,163
Alaska	8,800	\$523	\$11,610
Arizona	39,700	\$444	\$46,220
Arkansas	17,100	\$483	\$16,893
California	209,500	\$472	\$284,111
Colorado	31,400	\$469	\$44,528
Connecticut	21,200	\$579	\$43,372
Delaware	6,400	\$493	\$6,218
District of Columbia	7,700	\$493	\$8,914
Florida	123,800	\$518	\$195,707
Georgia	68,400	\$489	\$77,940
Hawaii	11,400	\$550	\$14,964
Idaho	6,600	\$442	\$6,197
Illinois	78,300	\$558	\$130,368
Indiana	38,000	\$551	\$45,057
Iowa	17,500	\$500	\$17,725
Kansas	19,200	\$497	\$18,405
Kentucky	19,700	\$505	\$20,934
Louisiana	30,000	\$506	\$36,252
Maine	6,300	\$476	\$7,869
Maryland	39,900	\$509	\$50,019
Massachusetts	42,100	\$568	\$88,823
Michigan	80,300	\$554	\$99,310
Minnesota	25,700	\$476	\$28,222
Mississippi	16,200	\$454	\$13,363
Missouri	37,200	\$497	\$37,917
Montana	4,700	\$463	\$4,709
Nebraska	9,000	\$472	\$9,399
Nevada	22,000	\$481	\$27,915
New Hampshire	6,900	\$584	\$9,875
New Jersey	60,900	\$563	\$94,555
New Mexico	11,700	\$468	\$11,866
New York	114,900	\$549	\$229,203
North Carolina	56,300	\$451	\$52,263
North Dakota	2,400	\$491	\$2,525
Ohio	62,500	\$514	\$77,318
Oklahoma	25,500	\$483	\$23,235
Oregon	28,800	\$437	\$31,069
Pennsylvania	60,600	\$538	\$87,613
Rhode Island	6,100	\$523	\$8,968
South Carolina	22,600	\$445	\$22,508
South Dakota	3,100	\$478	\$3,515

Tennessee	29,600	\$519	\$38,090
Texas	149,400	\$543	\$198,815
Utah	11,300	\$444	\$15,519
Vermont	2,900	\$488	\$3,364
Virginia	54,400	\$499	\$67,481
Washington	50,100	\$540	\$73,807
West Virginia	5,400	\$552	\$7,770
Wisconsin	23,600	\$485	\$24,409
Wyoming	2,800	\$539	\$3,225
Armed Forces	7,700	\$585	\$5,363
U.S. Possessions	1,300	\$598	\$1,675
Foreign Addresses	4,700	\$920	\$34,260
Total	1,873,100	\$511	\$2,547,415